

ARTICLE APPEARED
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THE WASHINGTON POST
1 February 1978

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Time Magazine's CIA Connection

On the front page of the Jan. 5 Post you ran a story about the testimony of Morton H. Halperin before the oversight subcommittee of the House Intelligence Committee concerning the relationship between the CIA and American news media. Mr. Halperin's testimony, as reported in the story, strongly implied that Time magazine ran a story on the Allende regime in Chile that was influenced by a false briefing from CIA. That is not true.

We have checked with the editors and correspondents involved in the Oct. 19, 1970 cover story on Allende, and they report the following:

As is customary, files were requested from many South American capitals, as well as from Washington and other cities around the world. The editors also studied a substantial amount of existing material from other sources, such as newspapers and magazines.

As part of this process, Jerry Hannifin, a seasoned and distinguished correspondent of Latin American affairs in our Washington bureau, set up a number of interviews, including one with CIA. Hannifin regarded the CIA as a source worth interviewing, a practice

that is commonplace in Washington and throughout the world. Indeed, other correspondents have testified before the House oversight subcommittee that it's often useful to approach CIA for information.

Our final story reflected the judgments of our editors and the correspondents who worked on it and had nothing in particular to do with the CIA briefing.

To enter the realm of conjecture for a moment, it would not surprise me if some CIA official might attempt to take credit for a paragraph or a thought that appeared in the Time story. It does surprise me that Mr. Halperin assumed that just because Time requested and received a briefing from CIA (false or not), its story would be necessarily colored by that briefing. Like other reputable news organizations, we try and weigh the full range of information from many sources and come up with a reasoned and responsible article. That's what we did with the Allende piece.

DONALD M. WILSON,

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